

HOUSE
STUDY

GROUP bill analysis

3/18/85

HB 536
Buchanan
(CSHB 536 by Buchanan)

SUBJECT: Creation of Multi-State Water Resources Planning
Commission

COMMITTEE: Natural Resources: committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 8 ayes--Craddick, Shaw, Geistweidt, Buchanan, Clark,
J. Harris, Roberts, Staniswalis

1 nay--Godwin

WITNESSES: For--Albert J. Gray, Sabine River Authority

Against--None

On--Herbert Grubb, Texas Department of Water Resources

DIGEST: CSHB 536 would create a new state agency, the Multi-State Water Resources Planning Commission. The commission would discuss regional water needs and ways of increasing supplies with representatives of other states. It would call on the Department of Water Resources to study the feasibility of Texas' using out-of-state water for which no reasonably foreseeable local need exists. It would also designate water-short areas of Texas and make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature about how to get surplus out-of-state water to these areas. The commission would discuss with other states the need for compacts on ground-water issues in areas where an aquifer underlies several states and on related subjects, including conservation and beneficial use of water.

The six commissioners would be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate for staggered six-year terms. The Governor would appoint the chair. Each commissioner would come from a different part of the state. Two would be public members; the other four would have backgrounds in higher education, private business, agriculture, and energy, respectively. The commission would meet at least quarterly, and would use Texas Department of Water Resources staff. Commissioners would be paid for their services and expenses out of a biennial appropriation.

The commission could appoint special representatives who live in parts of Texas that are near another state and who know the other state's water situation. These representatives could advise the commission and join in

OPPONENTS
SAY:
(continued)

proposed amendment statewide begins to loom pretty large if the Constitution is going to be amended one county at a time.